

Draft Minutes

Virginia Commission for the Arts

September 30, 2015

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia

Commissioners in attendance: Charles Ellis, Sharron Kitchen Miller, Shelley Kruger Weisberg, John Rainero, Jay Dick, Lorita Daniels, Bob Behr, Grace Han Wolf, Dorothy Blackwell, Wanda Judd, Faye Bailey, Ron Fabin.

Not in attendance: Jo Hodgkin

Staff: Margaret Vanderhye, Mackenzie Byrne, Cathy Welborn, Casey Polczynski

Chairman Charles Ellis called the meeting to order at 10am

Minutes of the June 2015 Commission Meeting

Amendments to the June Minutes included clarification to the minutes under Majors: "Shelley Kruger Weisberg shared that a VSO board member reached out to her to explain the myriad of financial concerns and plans to rectify." An amendment relating to Synetic Theater suggested "the hope that the theatre's artistic team could expand beyond its current composition in order to expand its horizons."

Commissioner Jay Dick made a motion to approve the Minutes as amended ; Commissioner Bob Behr seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director, Margaret Vanderhye gave an overview of the agenda, budget and Foundation funding for online granting. A discussion followed about the potential Commissioners' role and support for the budget and legislative initiatives.

Chairman Ellis gave an update on information regarding the board of the Virginia Arts Foundation. According to Virginia code, the VCA Commission board is also the board of the Virginia Arts Foundation. Ms. Vanderhye explained that The Board will be asked to vote as a Foundation Board of Trustees to release funds from the principal in the Foundation fund. The Governor can then put the money in his budget for the express purpose of establishing an online grant management system and substantially improve the overall efficiency of the VCA.

2016-2017 Guideline Revisions

Ms. Vanderhye gave an overview of committee work that took place over the summer. The Arts in Education Express grant guidelines are not included at this time in Guideline changes as

funding is not yet available for those grants. Changes to the Guidelines will be voted on in final in December following a three month public comment period. Today's vote releases the Guidelines in concept for a three month public comment period.

If additional funding is approved by the legislature in 2016, the Commission will vote in June to include the AExpress grants in FY17 and release the draft AExpress guidelines for a three month public review. They would receive final approval in September, 2016 in time for the beginning of the new AExpress grant cycle.

Chairman Ellis noted that most changes to the Guidelines are minor; it was noted that the proposed maximum amount of per grant funding in Project Grants and AIE was reduced from \$10,000 to \$7,500. There are additional changes to the descriptions of the Arts In Education programs.

Commissioner Wanda Judd made a motion to approve the Guidelines in concept with amendments, Vice Chair Sharron Kitchen Miller seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Arts in Education Coordinator Casey Polczynski gave an overview of the new grant program AExpress: Commissioner Faye Bailey made a motion to accept the program in concept only. Jay Dick seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Vanderhye discussed the amendments and timeline updates to the Strategic Plan. A line about wellness and creative art therapies was added to reflect our ongoing initiatives with the military, veteran, and NEA art therapy partnerships. Jay Dick made a motion to accept the Strategic Plan updates as amended. Commissioner John Rainero seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

PERFORMING ARTS TOUR DIRECTORY PANEL

Commissioner Shelley Kruger Weisberg attended the meeting on September 9th, and stated it was highly successful. The qualified panelists had expertise in a variety of disciplines. A discussion followed on the differences of opinion between the panel and staff recommendations for two groups: Einstein's Monkey and Sopranessence. The consensus was to follow the staff comments for voting purposes. A suggestion was made to add a question to the Performing and Tour Directory application about whether and how a group conducts workshops. Another suggestion was made to include geographic data of performance history in the review sheets next year.

Sharron Kitchen Miller made a motion to approve the 2016-2017 Roster for the Performing Arts Tour Directory. Faye Bailey seconded and the motion carried unanimously..

Ms. Vanderhye gave an overview about organizations for which the Board had requested follow up before releasing funding:

Virginia Opera: Ms. Vanderhye gave an overview of the organization's audit that the Commission received in September. Auditors believe that this organization should remain on watch status. As specified by the Board at the June meeting, payments will be made in three installments. A midyear report is needed to release the second payment. Commissioner Ron Fabin made a motion to make a first payment to Virginia Opera with caveat that they will update VCA on financials before the December meeting. Wanda Judd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously..

d'Art Center: The organization should be in its new space by the end of November, but d'art Center is continuing to do outreach and programs despite the setback to its location. Jay Dick moved to make first payment to d'Art Center. Shelley Kruger Weisberg seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Vanderhye gave an update on the Virginia Shakespeare Initiative and on the Art Works Conference.

Roster is almost complete. The one day conference will be January 27th at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. A block of discounted-rate rooms has been reserved at the Hilton Garden Inn. The conference is designed to be a best management practices overview for arts groups of all sizes. Sheila Johnson will keynote on the theme topic of what it will take to be a vibrant and successful organization over the next decade. There will be a plenary session panel right after the keynote speech to discuss what it will take to flourish and grow into the next decade. The five break-out session leaders will be the panelists. The floor will be open for an exchange between speakers and attendees. The five plenary panel and break out session leaders are:

Sarah Cunningham, VCU, on the topic of funding resources at the federal and private levels,

Amy Nisenson, Mary Morton Parsons Foundation, on the topic of building a better board for the challenges of the next decade,

Nello McDaniel, ArtsAction Research on strategic planning that provides a road map instead of just a wish list.

Russell Willis Taylor, former President and CEO of National Arts Strategies, on building a sustainable business model as a non-profit organization.

Margy Waller, Topos Partners, on partnerships that work to create areas of cultural significance and/or cultural arts districts.

Three additional workshops on (1) marketing, (2) veterans and military wellness through art therapy, and (3) improving educational outreach and impacts will follow the five concurrent and repeating breakout sessions. A hospitality networking reception will conclude the day.

The intent is to have an email blast announcement about the conference with the speaker roster within the week and then to launch the online registration by the end of October. As Save the Date post on the website has been up since the spring.

A discussion followed about making the presentations available to groups that could not attend the conference, and on how the Board can help spread the word about the conference.

Casey Polczynski gave an update on Poetry Out Loud. We have enrolled 800 more students than a year ago at this time. No one has applied from Region 1 or 2 yet. Region 6 has seen a large increase. Homeschool is an interesting niche. They are not signing up despite outreach. Teachers are the driving force to get the programs in place. Libraries may be able to reach out to homeschoolers. Our POL program will target them next year. Dates are in place for regional competitions and the state finals. In response to a question, Casey stated there is a national hashtag for the POL program. Casey spoke about working with interns to target social media about our current and upcoming POL programs.

Casey then gave an overview of the NASAA Professional Development Institute conference she attended in Jackson, Mississippi and how she will use her contacts and information to enhance our programs in Virginia.

Committee Reports:

Policy Committee: John Rainero discussed removing an organization from the Majors category. The question was raised about the advisability of having a more formal method to remove an organization from the Majors category. The Policy Committee decided that an organization cannot opt out, but that it can submit a formal letter to the VCA Executive Director and the board and/or policy committee for review, a procedure that was clarified in the Guidelines. The Policy Committee also discussed in-kind contributions as eligible income. Staff and board stated that they would not make an exception for rental income that was not arts-related and the guidelines on this policy would not change.

Arts in Education and Special Constituencies Committee: Wanda Judd reported for the AIE committee and stated that they were focused on developing the teaching artists roster. A short survey was sent out by the committee to teaching artists. Commissioner Lorita Copeland Daniels reported for the Special Constituencies Committee about the work they were doing for outreach with veterans groups.

Commissioners Sharron Kitchen Miller and Shelley Kruger Weisberg gave an update on the December Commission meeting in Williamsburg, scheduled for December 8th and 9th. The Commission will be meeting at the Williamsburg Regional Library. The business and cultural leaders of the Historic Triangle are working together to provide the Board a unique and special experience and the historic area will be fully decorated for the holidays when the Board members are there.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The meeting of the Virginia Arts Foundation convened at 11:46 a.m.

The Foundation Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve the use of principal funds to be included in the Governor's proposed FY17 budget for the express purpose of establishing and maintaining an online grant management system for the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

Following lunch, the Commission Board attended a docent led tour of the Mellon galleries at the VMFA.

The next meeting of the Commission is December 9th at the Williamsburg Regional Library at 9:00 a.m.